

For immediate release

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Positive Living BC Urges Health Canada to Provide and Regulate Home HIV Test Kits

Vancouver, BC: Positive Living BC is calling on Health Canada to take direct action and make federally standardized and regulated home HIV test kits available to Canadians. If provided, federally regulated and standardized home HIV test kits would be an important, low-barrier healthcare option empowering people to know their HIV status and take necessary steps to care for their health.

Home HIV test kit regulation, standardization and availability are particularly imperative in light of a new HIV testing app developed by Columbia University. The software analyses a finger-prick blood sample via a small kit attached to a smart phone or computer. The kit replicates a lab test, and allows the user to receive a HIV diagnosis within 15 minutes. In light of the growing number of unregulated home HIV tests available, Positive Living BC is calling on Health Canada to supply and regulate home HIV test kits in a newly released [position paper](#).

Illegally imported and unregulated home HIV test kits are currently the only option Canadians have to test for HIV outside of a healthcare setting. These tests are dangerous, with the potential to give inaccurate results, so much so that Health Canada often issues warnings against their use.

The risk of receiving inaccurate results via an unregulated home HIV test kit is compounded by receiving a HIV diagnosis without appropriate information or support. To this end, Positive Living BC advocates that Health Canada must:

- Regulate, standardize, and supply home HIV test kits;
- Clearly label home HIV test kits with information on test limitations, including statistics on how often the test provides inaccurate results;
- Accompany all home HIV test kits with information detailing where users can receive pre- and post-test counseling and care, including local support and counseling contacts; and
- Provide home HIV test kits free of charge, in alignment with current HIV testing and care in BC.

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The Positive Living Society of British Columbia exists to enable persons living with AIDS and HIV disease to empower themselves through mutual support and collective action.